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1. Name (Roger Cherry)
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A  
**LETTER,**  
IN  
VINDICATION OF THE PRINCIPLES  
OF THE  
**REFORMATION,**  
ADDRESSED TO  
**ROGER TERRY, Esq.,**  
*Commissioner of the Courts of Requests in New South Wales,*  
IN CONSEQUENCE OF A  
SPEECH DELIVERED BY HIM,  
*IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPEL, AT SYDNEY,*  
ON SUNDAY, JULY 29, 1832,  
BY THE  
**REV. WM. GRANT BROUGHTON, M.A.** ✓  
*Archdeacon of New South Wales and its Dependencies.*

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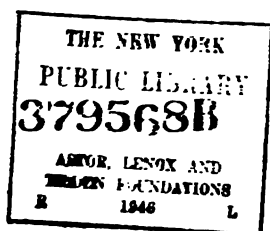
SECOND EDITION.

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1832.



## A LETTER,

&c. &c.

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Sydney, August 27, 1832.

*May go to Aug. 16, 1941*  
SIR,—You will require, I am persuaded, no other explanation of my reasons for thus addressing you, than that which I have already put you in possession of; namely, that as you, in commenting upon a private letter, had taken occasion publicly to controvert the main principle of the Reformation, it was proper that some notice should as publicly be taken of your arguments. In a controversy of this description, turning wholly upon a question in theology, it may be asked why are the opinions of a layman selected as the object of special remark? I reply, because at the late Meeting in the Roman Catholic Chapel you came forward as the most prominent defender of the Roman Catholic system, and of the practice which has prevailed of its receiving support and encouragement from Protestants. I question the propriety of bringing such subjects into discussion before an auditory thus assembled; and am still less satisfied that Religion will derive benefit from the publication of your observations in the columns of a Newspaper. But as you, Sir, have thought yourself authorised to employ that mode of expressing and circulating your opinions, you must not be offended by the notice of them, which anxiety for their own pure scriptural faith may draw from Protestants.

It may be said that the tenor of the letter which you were commenting upon, proved the wish and



intention of the writer to provoke discussion. Allow me to remind you that the provocation was given, and the discussion entered upon, by yourself. The letter of Sir Edward Parry was written in reply to an application from you to give his active support to measures which had for their object the extension and perpetuation of the Roman-Catholic Religion. Such an application, addressed to a Protestant, carries a most offensive imputation. It implies that the person addressed has no conviction at heart of the truth of his own profession ; but that while he outwardly appeals to the Scriptures as his only guide, and supplicates the mercy of God through the merits of his Saviour alone, he is yet so little in earnest upon these points as to be ready to lend his aid to the advancement of a system which lays down a directly opposite rule of faith, and pleads the merits and intercession of created and sinful beings unitedly with those of the eternal Son of God. By asking a Protestant to aid you in such a cause, you virtually tell him that he has no heart and no sincerity ; but that you believe him to be a person prepared to sanction contradictions. Sir Edward Parry, I am well assured, is able to defend himself ; and therefore shall offer no other observation than that he has my cordial respect and my thanks (if these are of any value in his estimation) for the manliness and intrepidity with which, when thus attacked, he has expressed his sentiments. Such feelings as he has manifested, will, I am quite aware, receive very little encouragement under the prevailing system of phlegmatic and listless unconcern respecting matters of faith and principle. It is, I know, accounted a proof of a contracted and illiberal disposition to manifest any degree of earnestness upon that subject, which ought to take the lead of all other subjects in our contemplations and affections. It must be obvious to every observer, that the system of the Romish Church at the pre-

sent moment, is to lull the jealousy of Protestants; and, not content with reducing them to indifference and inaction, to induce the luke-warm and unsuspecting to lend their active aid to a cause, which, if they knew their own principles, they must think it worse than sacrilege in any degree to espouse. You could scarcely expect, Sir, that we (for I speak in the name of all reflecting Protestants) should be content without notice or remonstrance to witness a consolidation of this system, which has been already carried on too long. It has become our duty to speak out. The opposition which you have already encountered from one individual will have the effect, I trust, of inducing others to pause, and reflect upon their own responsibility here and hereafter, before they lend their aid, upon any consideration whatever, to that which they are not religiously persuaded is agreeable to the truth.

That which misleads the generality of Protestants, and delivers them over bound hand and foot into the power of their adversaries, to work for their interest and according to their pleasure, is forgetfulness or inconsideration of their own principles. Why are they Protestants? What caused their ancestors to become Protestants? It was the conviction they entertained that the truth of God and the purity of the Gospel could not be maintained under the system which the Church of Rome sought to force upon them. I do not charge all Protestants who act differently from Sir Edward Parry, with deliberately intending to promote error in religion; but I cannot acquit them of indifference which has all the ill-effects of such an intention, and is, therefore, but in a limited degree less culpable.

The tendency of late proceedings, and especially of the speech delivered by you in the Roman Catholic Chapel, is to encourage still more in the Protestant mind this

latitude of thinking with respect to the standard of Faith. This gives you two advantages; the one immediate, the other in prospect. First, you prevail on them, under pretext of liberality, to help you forward in your religious views; and in the next place you may hope that, having cast away all concern for their own faith, they may in due season become more ready recipients of another. I say this under a persuasion, the fruit of long enquiry and reflection, that the Churches of England and Rome, having adopted first principles so different, must *ever* remain distinct and adverse. Neither can gain a religious advantage but at the other's expense. Believe me, Sir, it is not any want of charity, but it is love of truth which leads me to make this assertion. God forbid that we as individuals should not live together in harmony and peace. But I cannot be silent when I find you engaged in an attempt to shake the fidelity of Protestants to their own communion, and to obtain from them a positive effort in favour of yours. I have no disposition to question your right to set off your religion to the best advantage by any exertions of your own and of those who think with you; but I do and must ever object to the enlistment of professed Protestants on your side.

If indeed a man have not made up his mind upon this most momentous controversy, he is not worthy to be called a religious man. He may take part with you or against you as the whim may incline him; but his support or his opposition do not deserve to be attributed to any feeling more respectable than that which I have assigned. But if he, after seriously asking himself the question, "What is truth," shall have decided within himself that truth is to be sought for upon Protestant principles, or from the Scriptures alone, that man, I do say, shews little reverence for the appointments of God, when he takes an active

part in support of a system which according to his own acknowledgment is founded upon error.

To secure myself from the charge of misrepresenting the principles of either Church, I will place them here in contrast with each other ; premising only, that if I were acquainted with any more authentic exposition of the principles of the Church of Rome than is contained in the Decrees of the Council of Trent, I would most readily apply to it for information. At the fourth Session of that Assembly, and by its supposed infallible authority, the rule of Faith among Roman Catholics was thus fixed and declared. " This sacred oecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Spirit, and presided over by three Legates of the Apostolic See, having this object in view that, errors being removed, the real purity of the Gospel may be preserved in the Church ; (which, promised aforetime by the prophets in the Holy Scriptures, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, first promulgated by his own mouth, and afterwards ordained to be preached to every creature by the Apostles as being the fountain of all saving truth and discipline of morals ; knowing, also, that this truth and discipline is contained in the written books, and in the unwritten traditions which having been received by the Apostles from the mouth of Christ himself, or from the dictates of the Holy Spirit, were handed down and transmitted even to us ;) following the examples of the orthodox Fathers, receives and venerates with *equal* sentiments of piety and reverence all the books, as well of the Old as of the New Testament, since one God was the author of them both, and *also the Traditions* relating as well to Faith as to Morals, inasmuch as proceeding from the mouth of Christ, or dictated by the Holy Spirit, they have been preserved in an uninterrupted succession in the Catholic Church."

The corresponding declaration of the fundamental principle of the Church of England, in which indeed all the Reformed Churches acquiesce, is set forth in her Sixth Article. "*Holy Scripture* containeth *all* things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read *therein*, nor may be proved *thereby*, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

I have placed these contradictory declarations thus directly in contrast, in order that the inconsistency may be made manifest, of a Protestant lending his aid to uphold the Roman Catholic Faith. He is giving his assent at once to adverse propositions. He is affirming with the same breath that Holy Scripture contains all things necessary to salvation; and yet, that some truths necessary to salvation are not contained in Scripture, but are handed down by Tradition only. He acknowledges that nothing is to be required of any man as an article of faith, or to be thought necessary to salvation, unless it be contained in, or may be proved by, Scripture; and yet he comes forward as the advocate of those who exclude from salvation, and pronounce an anathema upon, himself and all others who will not believe very many things which are confessedly *not* in the Scriptures, and, we maintain, cannot be proved thereby. How any person can lend his sanction, encouragement, and assistance to obtain the means of propagating what he acknowledges to be a religious error, and yet escape the guilt of prevarication, I confess my own inability to discover. If he be persuaded that the Scriptures are the word of Truth, and that the Truths which they contain, are the most glorious inheritance of mankind, it must be a miserable sophistry which prevails upon him, for any consideration, to further the views of those who set up a different rule contradictory to the Bible.—

It is, no doubt, very consistent with *your* principles to say, as you are reported to have done, that you "connect your belief of the Scriptures with a faith on the authority of which they rest;" but what proof do you give, that because the authenticity of the Scriptures is proved by testimony, or, if you please, by tradition—tradition is, therefore, of equal authority with the Scriptures, and binds our assent to many points of faith and practice concerning which the Scripture is silent? You adduce the well-known saying of St. Augustine, that "he would not believe the Gospel unless he were compelled by the authority of the Church." This is one of those pointed sentences into which men of ardent tempers are occasionally betrayed. They dart forth a sentiment which, though true in a certain limited sense, is not true without that limitation. The consequence is, that even with the best intentions, they do much mischief; because the world at large is apt to understand them literally, and nine persons take the maxim in a wrong sense, for one who takes it in the right one. With submission to St. Augustine, I maintain, God has not so left himself without witness, but that an individual possessing the Gospels, might be so impressed with their internal evidence as to embrace and be persuaded of the reality of the things which they testify as pertaining to salvation, even though he had never heard of the Church, or of an assemblage of believers agreeing in the reception of the Gospel from the earliest age. Still, such an individual must be anxious to know what was the origin of such remarkable books; when, or by whom, or unto whom, they were first promulgated; how received, how preserved. Not knowing anything of the history of the Church, he could have no assurance upon these points; and consequently his faith, however sincere, would be imperfect or encumbered with difficulties. For the prevention or removal of

such difficulties, St. Augustine declares recourse must be had to the Church, to its testimony or authority. Undoubtedly he does. But then, Sir, I must ask you, What Church? I know the inveteracy with which those of your persuasion are accustomed, whenever they hear or read of "The Church," to apply it to the Church of Rome; as if that were *the* Church or the *Catholic* Church of Christ. But, indeed, let me assure you, this is a very great error, and the source probably of almost all the other errors into which you have fallen. St. Augustine does not speak of the authority of the Church of Rome, as leading him to put faith in the Gospel; but he refers to the Church in its proper and universal sense, and to its tradition or testimony as the concurrent opinion of *all* believers *every where*. And certainly in this sense, the unanimous testimony of the Church does confer upon the Gospels a moral and reasonable assurance of authenticity; such as must determine every candid enquirer to receive them as of divine origin and authority. Such an assurance, may I without offence observe, they never could possess, if the Church by which they are attested were no other than the single Church of Rome. Can you fail besides to perceive what force this very declaration of St. Augustine has, or ought to have, against the reception of tradition? He declares that he could not receive the Gospel except upon the authority of the Church, or of unbroken and universal testimony. Sir, this is the very reason why we Protestants reject tradition; because you have never been able to prove with respect to any one tradition, concerning either faith or morals, that there exists on its behalf any such unbroken and universal acknowledgement, by means of which it could be traced down from the days of the Apostles, to the present age. If you can produce any doctrine so attested I will pledge myself to show that it is either contained in the Scripture, or may be deduced from it; and that it is

also contained among the acknowledged doctrines of the Church of England.

From Augustine let us pass to St. Paul, whom you quote as another authority in favour of tradition. "Continue," he says to Timothy,\* "in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them." The Apostle in other passages salutes Timothy as his "dearly beloved," as his "own son in the faith;" and I am therefore little inclined to dispute that St. Paul is here referring to himself as the spiritual father and instructor of the son of Eunice; and that on the assurance of *his* authority, Timothy was exhorted and required to "continue in the things which he had learned." But before you require us to receive and apply this as the rule of our own faith, let me request you will attentively consider the difference of circumstances. Who was Saint Paul? an Apostle who had seen the Lord Jesus Christ; and had been instructed by him in all the essential facts and doctrines of the Gospel. Even though the same word "tradition" may be used to describe the oral communications of St. Paul to Timothy, as well as the unwritten deposit of which your Church professes to be the guardian, I must ever most earnestly contend that in the reality of the things spoken of there is no sameness, and scarcely any resemblance. It is a most inconsequent mode of reasoning to infer that because an inspired Apostle, who had received instruction from the Lord himself, was able by word of mouth to transmit the same without error or abatement to his *own* immediate disciple, *therefore* the same may with equal certainty be handed down in the same manner through so many ages; and that we, who cannot possibly trace out the first origin of certain tenets or follow them downward in a connected stream, must nevertheless



receive them with a submission as implicit as that with which Timothy received the words of the Lord spoken by Paul. Sir, I must shew myself a Protestant here. On behalf of all my brethren I must protest against such a tyrannical assumption. Before we acquiesce in the traditions which your Church seeks to impose upon us, and by means of which she may impose any doctrines that she pleases, we must in all reason require you to prove that we have as perfect means as Timothy possessed, of "*knowing* from whom we learned them." And let me remark with what surprise I observe that in your quotation of this authority you should have stopped exactly where you did. Why not proceed with those words of the Apostle which immediately follow ? "And that from a child thou hast known *the Holy Scriptures* which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God ; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness ; that the man of God may be *perfect*, *thoroughly* furnished unto *all good works*." According to my plain understanding the man of God cannot be *more* than "*perfect*;" he cannot come behind in any spiritual gift if he be "*thoroughly* furnished unto *all good works*." And these things, we have assurance, the Scriptures are competent to effect for him. Our Saviour also points out these, not obscurely, as the word of God, and as the sole foundation of belief in him. "Ye have not *his word*," he says "abiding in you ; for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not."\* What course then does he enjoin them to pursue for remedy of these mortal deficiencies ? or in order that they might have the word of God in them, and be led to a belief in his Son. He does not recommend their having recourse to tradition. No ; but he emphatically gives them this direction : "*Search the Scriptures ; for in them*

ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me."\* All our desire is that with respect to the Scriptures of the New Testament you would allow us to come to the same conclusion which our Saviour held concerning the old. The argument employed by those on your side in favour of tradition, is briefly this; that several years elapsed after the Ascension of our Lord before any single book of the New Testament was written, and many more before they became universally known, and were collected, and received as divine; that during this interval, the sole vehicle of instruction was oral tradition, and therefore that when at length the written word was added to the unwritten, the latter would not on that account forfeit the authority which it had previously enjoyed. But what authority have you for this opinion? not the decisions of Christ with respect to the Old Testament, nor those of his Apostles relative to the new. The conclusion to which they lead us is, that the written word was given, not to serve as a rule of faith conjointly with tradition, but with the express design of superseding the authority and use of tradition altogether. The appointments of God are uniform, and his dealings run parallel under both dispensations. The religion of the patriarchs was preserved by tradition during 430 years; as that of Christ was for about 30. Then, in the former case, when it is to be presumed that tradition was no longer safely to be trusted, the Books of Moses were written; and afterwards those of the Psalms and Prophets. The Old Testament therefore, it may with as much justice be said, was *added* to the previously existing traditions; many of which were accumulated and preserved by the Jews as supplementary to and explanatory of, the written word. The Jews too had apparently very strong grounds to justify their appeal to tradition; among which were to be reckoned the great length of time during

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\* John V. v. 32.

which the knowledge of God had been preserved by it alone; and the injunction delivered to them by Moses before his decease. "Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations; ask thy father and he will shew thee; thy elders and they will tell thee."\* Has the Church of Rome any text to produce, in favour of her traditions, equally pertinent with the above? By no means. If then our Lord directed the Jews, who had such an argument on their side, to "Search the Scriptures," and charged them with having "made the word of God of none effect by their traditions," how much more forcibly would he have urged this against you?

We may thus reason very strongly from analogy against the authority of tradition; because no explanation can be given why the same principle upon which it was condemned under the Jewish dispensation ought not to be extended to it under the Christian. In fact, if we examine the declarations of the authors of the New Testament, we shall find that their very purpose in becoming *writers*, was to furnish security against the errors which even in that early age, a reliance on tradition was beginning to introduce. St. John assures us that if the things which Jesus did should be written every one, the world itself would scarcely contain the records. † Here assuredly was an ample and edifying field for the exercise of traditional fidelity. And yet what has it done? and why has it done no more? Of all the sayings of Jesus unrecorded by the Evangelists, but one has been preserved; and that one has been preserved in consequence of having found a place in the writings of St. Paul. Speaking of himself, St. John most significantly says—"This is the disciple that testifieth of these things, and wrote these things;" and again "these are written, that ye might

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\* Deuteronomy xxi, 7.

† John xxi, 25.

believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name.”\* It is very true that in an earlier stage of the faith, St. Paul commended certain traditions to Timothy upon the ground of his knowing from whom he learned them; and I have stated reasons why this, as a temporary resource, was sufficient, so long as the Apostles were in existence, to maintain, and give assurance of, the conformity of such traditions with the doctrine delivered by Christ. But at a later period, when this assurance must be greatly weakened or altogether fail, as the last of the Apostolic body was on the point of departure from the world, the resource of tradition was to be superseded by another authority less liable to uncertainty and exception. This the expression of St. John plainly intimates, as he says explicitly that he *wrote* these things in order that they might be believed.—And let it be remarked what this belief ~~was~~ to include. Even the cardinal doctrine “that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God;” that doctrine on which our Lord declares that he would “build his Church.”† It is not my intention to enter into the whole question of tradition, which has filled so many volumes. I would rather direct attention to a few points only, and such as have not been generally dwelt upon in connexion with this argument. Look therefore at the proem of St. Luke’s Gospel, in composing which he was encouraged, perhaps assisted, by St. Paul. His design in writing, he most convincingly explains, was to counteract the inaccurate representations which had even then arisen from incautious reliance on tradition. These are his words—“For as much as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye witnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having

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\* John xx, 31 and xxi, 24

† Matt. xvi, 18.

had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed."\* In this passage there is a plain reference to *tradition*; to a statement set forth "as they delivered, who were, from the beginning, eye-witnesses and ministers of the word." It is very plain also that errors had crept into the "declaration" or digest so set forth; otherwise the circumstance of its having been given to the world, could not reasonably have caused St. Luke to think it incumbent on him *also* to write. You will say probably that he still does not object to the oral account itself, as delivered by the eye-witnesses from the beginning; but only to those written accounts which, professing to be derived from them, conveyed an erroneous representation. It is true. Nevertheless the inference is unavoidable—that St. Luke thought the fidelity and certainty of the oral accounts might be impaired by the emission of such inaccurate written accounts; and that to restrain the consequent growth of uncertainties, it was necessary for him to investigate all things from the beginning, and commit them to writing.—If then, during the life time of the Apostles, a danger of this kind is proved to have existed, and could thus only be guarded against, what assurance or safety can we have in building our faith upon traditions which remained for an indefinite period unwritten, and until long after all opportunity and possibility of tracing them to their origin had passed away? It is worthy of observation, that very many of the Books of the New Testament were written for the express purpose of determining and protecting the purity of particular doctrines, as they came to be successively controverted. The Gospel of St. John was designed to assert the Divinity of Christ against the errors of Cerinthus;

the epistles to the Romans and Galatians<sup>†</sup> were meant to settle the controversies concerning the abolition of the Mosaic Law, and the doctrine of justification ; the epistle to the Hebrews is a formal vindication of the atonement ; and in like manner St. Luke's intention was to set down such an account of the words and actions of Christ, as should be sufficient to clear away the misrepresentations ~~to~~ which they had been exposed. Now, *if it be true* that all those doctrines, which you maintain upon the credit of tradition, were received by the Apostles from the mouth of Christ, how is it to be accounted for that his declarations relating to *these* doctrines were not perverted in common with his other discourses, as from the absence of all recorded attempts to vindicate and explain *them*, we must conclude they were not ? *If* he communicated to his Apostles, and they taught their converts, the doctrines of transubstantiation and purgatory for example, it is very singular, assuredly, that these should not have given rise to difference of opinion, so as in some part or other of the writings of the Apostles to be brought into discussion, as well as the atonement and justification. It is highly remarkable, that when St. Luke found it necessary to write a corrected statement of those discourses of Christ, which might confirm Theophilus in the things which he had learned, there should not be contained in any one of the discourses which he records a single allusion to any of the peculiar or traditionary dogmas of your Church. The only way in which this can be accounted for, is by admitting the Protestant conclusion, that no such doctrines were *taught* by Christ, or *known* to his Apostles. And moreover if the authority of the Church be sufficient, as you maintain, to define infallibly what traditions are divine and genuine, would it not have been incumbent on Theophilus to admit on the sole autho-

rity of his instructors the certainty of the things in which he had been instructed? and how then, for the purpose of confirming him in them, could it have been necessary for St. Luke to investigate? It is evident that those instructors, whoever they may have been, dealt with him as with a person having the right of private judgment. They did not say to him, "the traditions which we deliver to you are such as we have received; you cannot, it is true, trace them with certainty to their first derivation; but nevertheless be contented to admit them on our authority." Instead of this St. Luke undertakes for his satisfaction to trace back every thing to the original witnesses. And yet we find your principal champion maintaining against the Protestants, that the most unquestionable token by which any doctrine can be proved to have proceeded from the Apostles is that "it is not in the power of any one to shew where it had a beginning."\* There is an evident fallacy in his attempt to limit this remark to such doctrines as are embraced by all Christian Churches; because there are in fact *no such doctrines*. If there be any tenet received by *all* Churches, that is as universally as the Scriptures themselves, it is undertaking little to affirm that plain and satisfactory evidence of it will be found in the Scriptures; and then all men can shew where it had a beginning. In reality the only doctrines which advance a claim to be received *without* that description of proof which St. Luke afforded to Theophilus, are the doctrines which the Roman Catholics build upon tradition. These extra-scriptural opinions the Protestant is satisfied, rest upon an insecure and inadmissible foundation; because although they are *said* to have a particular origin it is *impossible* to trace them to it. Both the dispensations of God began with the employment of tradition; but we have the au-

\* Bossuet. Expos. of the Cath. Faith, chap. xvii.

thority of our Lord for asserting that the patriarchal traditions, which all had reference to him, were rendered unnecessary by the written word into which they were incorporated. He condemns *all* appeal to tradition, by the possessors of that word, because it made the word of none effect: and therefore when he would fully instruct his own disciples, "he began at Moses and all the prophets, and expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."\* The more attentively indeed we examine this matter of tradition, the firmer is our persuasion, that whether under the old or the new covenant, it was a temporary expedient; designed from the outset to be superseded by the introduction of Scripture; the only infallible rule; the only unchangeable witness. We know it is the practice of artists in the first instance to prepare a mould, upon which all the lines and lineaments of their design are accurately laid down. But this is a mere archetype of the intended work. It is in the cast, which is obtained from that mould, that the features are exhibited in permanency and perfection. The mould itself having accomplished its purpose, is thrown aside and no longer thought of.

Earnestly do I hope that such Roman Catholics as may peruse these arguments will have the candour to consider whether they are just; and if so whether the Sixth Article of the Church of England must not be a safer foundation for a Christian to rest upon, than the Decree of the Council of Trent. The Jews were warned and exhorted to "Search the Scriptures;" and when they refused to do this, preferring to follow guides of their own, they were abandoned to crucify their King. Thus be assured, Sir, it will ever prove. Wherever tradition is set, as it was by the Jews, upon an equality with the Scripture, there is reason

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\* Luke xxi, 27.



to dread a manifestation of the spirit of Antichrist ; which, either directly or indirectly, “denieth the Father and the Son.” Against what other spirit indeed is that terrible anathema directed, which causes us to tremble while it “testifieth unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this Book, if any man *add* unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this Book.”\*

You make, I observe, an attempt to derive support to your cause from the sentiments of some among our own hierarchy. “The Protestant Bishop of Elphin,” you are reported to have said, “writes thus—By far the greatest part of the population of my Diocese consists of (Roman) Catholics. I cannot make them good Protestants ; I therefore wish to make good (Roman) Catholics of them ; and with this intention I put into their hands the works of Gother. It is not that I have any such objections to urge against the (practical not controversial) works of Gother as to desire that they should not be read. But if these works, which it is presumed would have the effect of making them “good Roman Catholics,” were to be put into the hands of any persons for this sole reason, that such persons would not receive an unadulterated representation of the truth, I dissent from and abhor the suggestion from the bottom of my heart. According to this principle the Apostles might have said both to Jews and Greeks, Since you will not receive our preaching according to the import of God’s word, and we cannot make you good Christians, we will preach to you such doctrines as are more agreeable to you, and will fix you more strongly in your present persuasions. I know not, Sir, from what source you derive the above sentiment, nor upon what authority you attribute it to the Bishop of Elphin ; nor whether the

*present* possessor of that See be meant. In that case I should have strong reasons for thinking that the inference which you intend us to draw is altogether groundless ; for at a meeting of the friends of *Scriptural Education*, in Ireland, held at Dublin on the 11th of January last, the following letter was read by the Secretary, the Reverend Thomas Kingston :—

“ Elphin, January 9, 1832.

“ Sir,—I am obliged to inform you that it will be totally out of my power to attend the Meeting of the Friends of *Scriptural Education*, which is to be held at the Rotunda to-morrow. It is with much regret that I feel myself unable to do so ; as *the object* of it is one which I view *with intense interest*.

“ I remain, Sir, your obedient humble servant,

(Signed) “ J. ELPHIN.”

Again, in the expressed opinions of the present Bishop of London, I can discover nothing which, being allowed, would shew that Protestants may blamelessly and even laudably assist in giving facilities for the diffusion of Roman Catholic principles. His Lordship, according to your quotation of his words, remarks that service is to be rendered to religion “ not by retaliating mistatements, invectives, and calumnies, or crudely asserting an unqualified right of private judgment, but by referring to primitive antiquity.” Few, be assured Sir, if any, in the Church of England, whose opinions are worthy of attention, will refuse to unite in sentiment with the Bishop of London.—Where, let me ask, have any of that description asserted the “ *unqualified* right of private judgment ? !” The right of judging for ourselves is, like the right of acting for ourselves, an endowment bestowed upon us by the Author of all good ; and although the one right be cognizable by human laws, the other not, yet if we use either of them in an “ *unqualified*” manner, that is with-

out due regard to the lights of reason and revelation, or to the known will of God, and to the circumstances in which He has placed us, I do not believe that any sound divine of our communion will, any more than the Bishop of London, contend that we exercise them without guilt. There is always a mean, if we are willing to trace it out, between slavery and licentiousness. There is a great difference, you must admit, between referring to the opinions of those holy men who had immediate, or next to immediate, communication with the Apostles, that they may serve as guides to us in fixing the true sense of Scripture, and referring, as you do, to the traditions of a less carefully discriminated antiquity with a view to set them up as rivals of the Scripture. The former of these is a resource which no judicious and humble Protestant will decline, when he is enquiring what doctrines are contained in Holy Writ, or may be proved thereby. If you still doubt whether the Church of England does make that acknowledgement of the principle that primitive antiquity ought to be consulted, let me refer you to the creeds which she has adopted as summaries and expositors of Scripture. Do not these represent the sentiments of a truly primitive antiquity? and does she not daily refer to them as a test of her principles? And I must be permitted to observe, since you challenge the comparison, that in her exclusive adherence to the earliest models, the Church of England may read a lesson to your's upon the intermixture of comparatively modern forms which the latter has adopted.—From the ancient and orthodox Creed of Nice, which we have followed, and for every article of which the Scripture affords a warrant, you make us to pass, by a violent revulsion to those newly imagined tenets which in the Creed of Pope Pius 4th are, after a most inartificial and unsatisfactory manner, added to the ancient profession. Many times have I sought earnestly, but in vain, to discover a tolerable rea-

son why those Holy Fathers who assembled to fix a summary of the Christian faith should have omitted from it all those articles which you now make to rest wholly or partially upon tradition, if they believed, as you do, that tradition and the Scriptures stood upon the same footing of authority. Why, when they had professed that Jesus Christ "was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary," should they have neglected to add that the Virgin Mary is to be worshipped? When they introduced "one Catholic and Apostolic Church," why did they not point out one Church distinctly as "the mother and mistress of all Churches;" or wherefore with the "remission of sins" did they not unite some mention of indulgences for them? I assure you, Sir, that I ask these questions not with any design of catechising you. I would not be guilty of such incivility. But I write thus in the hope that you, as a sincere enquirer after the truth, may be induced to give a fair hearing to what the Protestant has to object, and to consider these questions, not with an unqualified, but still, with a free use of your own understanding than you may have hitherto exerted. "Call no man your *master* upon earth." "Prove *all* things: hold fast that which is *good*."

Having detained you already perhaps too long, I will only observe that my intention was to point out the real difference, that which lies at the bottom of every other difference, between our respective Churches. Such differences may be deemed very unimportant, nay sometimes highly ridiculous even, by men who pride themselves upon their enlightened and liberal views. Upon these I can have little hope of producing any effect. But they who think seriously of their obligation to obey God rather than man, will not fail to remember that all the corruptions (as we esteem them) of the pure doctrines of God have arisen from a desertion of his word. To the equalization of tra-

dition with the Scriptures, we trace the rise, and attribute the maintenance, of those opinions which Protestants adjure:—the infallibility of your single Church: the suppression of the right of private judgment; the reception of seven Sacraments; the tenet of transubstantiation; the denial of the cup to the laity; the propitiatory sacrifice of the Mass; purgatory; prayers for the dead; the invocation of saints; the veneration of relics and images; the power of indulgences; the supremacy of the Pope as Universal Bishop; prayer in an unknown tongue; restrictions upon reading the Scriptures; and the denial of our justification by faith alone. It is easy to maintain, so long as general terms are used, that the difference between us and you is unimportant; but when the *consequences* of that difference come to be thus stated in detail, it evidently appears to be *vital*, and, so long as you continue to insist upon your present rule, must be *incurable*. My opinions upon this subject I should have been satisfied, as heretofore, with maintaining in private, had I not been informed of your public attack upon the principle of the Reformation, and of your application to the Protestant inhabitants of the Colony to favor the religious interests of the Roman Catholics. It became then my duty as a Protestant Minister to tell them plainly that they could not do this without guilt. I do not repeat your not very reverent or becoming parody upon Scriptural language; but in effect you say there is no prohibition against a Protestant subscribing to build a Roman Catholic Chapel. I must differ from you upon this point, and maintain that the whole tenor of the Gospel is opposed to such a proceeding; in that it requires us to have in all our doings, a single eye to the advancement of *truth*. It is a characteristic of genuine *charity* that it "rejoiceth in the truth:" in the discovery, and exclusive support and encouragement of it. Carry

then as far as you will the maxim that all men should be permitted without molestation to worship God agreeably to their own consciences, it can never lead to the conclusion for which you are contending; nor justify Protestants in lending active aid to strengthen and extend a system which, if their principles have any meaning, they must regard as the parent of error and opposed to the truth of God, "Let every man," your Scriptures say, "abound in his own sense;\*" let him follow his own way of thinking. But before we allege this maxim to justify our connivance at those sentiments in others from which we ourselves dissent, let us be at least well satisfied that our differences turn upon such harmless scruples alone as the Apostle was referring to. It is a different thing when the dispute goes to affect the foundations of piety itself. Then undoubtedly we should take no step without due consideration of the account which we all must render of our employment of our several talents; when the sole-enquiry will be "*Hast thou occupied them for my service?*" My design in writing thus is, I repeat, to warn my Protestant brethren against submission to the insidious paralyzing influence which has been exerted to persuade them that they are justified in encouraging the Roman Catholic religion, as being but another equally acceptable mode of worshipping the same God. I wish to excite them to reflect whether they have a real, and not merely a nominal, belief; whether the Reformation proceeded upon any distinguishing fundamental principle; and if so, whether it is worth contending for. Why did the Reformers at the cost of their lives refuse to do any act which might be thought to express the slightest acknowledgement or approval of the Church of Rome, but that they were persuaded it had adopted a false Rule of Faith, and believed that in its

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\* Rom. xiv. 5.

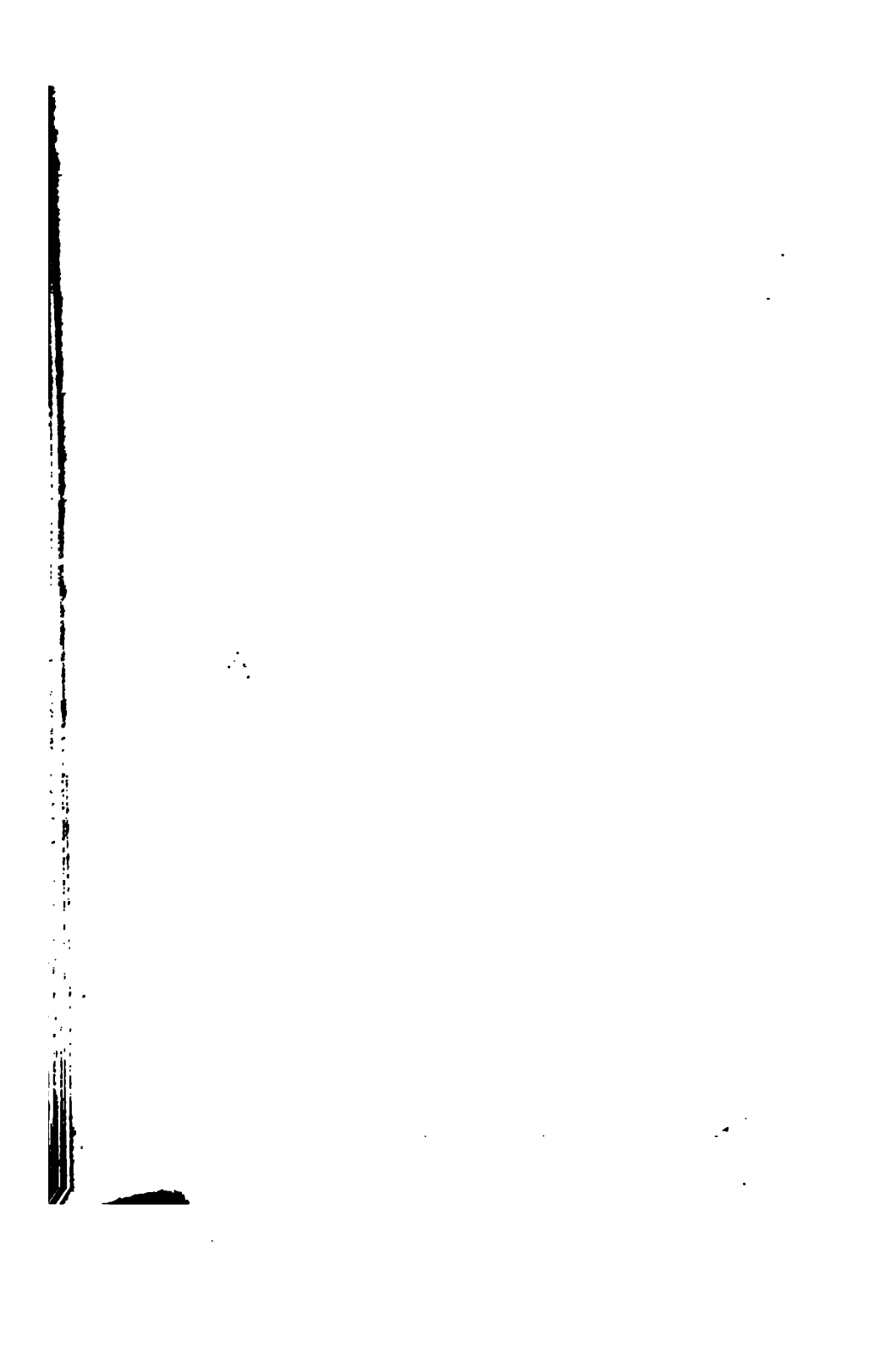
consequences it endangered the faith itself, and was inimical to the righteousness of God? How can we then, as their professed followers, give you the support you ask without belying our convictions and proving ourselves traitors to our own principles? These sentiments, Sir, I am more than fearful will not be acceptable to you. But I have felt myself called thus publicly to express them from finding you engaged in an extensive and apparently not unsuccessful attempt to attach to your cause those for whose souls I am to watch as one that must give an account. Neither is it on the exclusive behalf of the Protestant Faith that I write; but under a sense of anxiety for the general interests of religion. So long as men are earnest and sincere, even in erroneous views with respect to Christ, there may be in them a feeling of real piety; and those efforts will at least be honest which they make for the extension of *their own* opinions. But we have now to speak of the system of giving countenance and support to religious opinions which are diametrically opposed to our own. Its adoption here may for a time promote the apparent interests of your Church; but I warn you of the injury which religion must sustain from the example of such an alliance. You will do no good, even according to your own understanding of the term, to those with whom you are united; and they will do you much harm. You will not bring them over to your Church; but what if they should carry into its bosom the spirit of their own indifference! In availing yourself of their assistance, you recognize a principle which, carried to its full extent, would authorise all men to encourage all sorts of opinions, without consideration of their truth or falsehood. I do not perceive where the limit is to be fixed; for if any of us may in one instance support that which we do not believe, why not in all? It is a very different case from that of forsaking one form of Christianity for the purpose of em-

bracing another under a conviction of its superior truth and sanctity. There is at least consistency in such a proceeding; but we are required to abandon consistency, and to admit that all zeal and earnestness are out of place with regard to questions which involve the essentials of religious truth. Whenever we are brought to a general persuasion that so much laxity upon the subject of religious engagements is admissible, we cannot be far from thinking that religion itself is an affair of very little moment. For let your judgment of men in this behalf be formed upon observation of their conduct in other instances. If in the common affairs of life they ever display such unconcern about their own way of thinking, and such readiness to exert themselves in favour of an opposite persuasion, you conclude at once that they have no strong feeling of the importance of the subject either to themselves or others.— You, Sir, I am painfully sensible, are sanctioning an awful precedent in favour of religious indifference under the pretext of toleration. The enemies of religion itself, under each and all of its forms, will quickly make you perceive its force when applied to their own purposes. You may accomplish what appears to you a great object for your Church, but you will discover, when it is too late, that the effect of that very success has been to eat out the entire heart of religion, and to leave nothing remaining but its outward form. I do not expect to be immediately or generally believed, but time will prove that I am right. To its decision I appeal; and earnestly desiring that all men may know and embrace the truth.

I remain, Sir,

Your very obedient humble servant,  
W. G. BROUGHTON.





1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.



